

## Using the Bus

The following notes will help you in using the bus, especially if it is your first time using one.

### Planning the journey

It's a good idea to check which bus is best to catch. All school bus services are shown in this booklet, but you may be using a regular bus service which carries other people. Try and find out in advance where to find the nearest stop is, so that you are confident where to go on the first day.

Even if you've caught the bus before then check that the times and the route haven't changed, you don't want to be late on the first day!

Plan to arrive at the stop 5 minutes before the bus is due to ensure that you don't miss it.

### Waiting for the bus

There may be more than one person waiting for a bus at the stop, so wait sensibly away from the road; please be mindful of other bus passengers who may be waiting for the bus also. Do not push or trip others on the pavement whilst waiting for the bus, as it could cause an accident.

Make sure you have your pass and any fare ready before the bus arrives, this will mean that the driver won't have to wait for you to find it and delay the journey.

As the bus approaches make sure it is your bus by checking the service number and destination which are clearly displayed on the front of the bus; raise your arm as a signal to the driver that you want the bus to stop.

### Getting on the bus

Board the bus calmly and do not push other people in front or to the side of you to get on more quickly; make sure that you allow other passengers to board the bus if they were there before you.

Show your pass to the driver, and where necessary pay your fare, try to have the correct change if possible.

Then find a seat on the bus, use seats upstairs if necessary.

### During the journey

Stay seated throughout the journey, if seatbelts are fitted then they must be worn.

If no seats are available and you must stand then ensure that you always hold onto handrails, that you don't stand upstairs, on the stairs or to the side of the driver.

Do not distract the driver unless it is an emergency and do not cause any damage to the bus or interfere with its working.

### Getting off the bus

When your stop is next, ring the bell once. If it has already been rung, you do not need to ring it again.

If you need to cross the road when you get off the bus, wait until the bus has moved off and you can see the road clearly in both directions or go to the nearest available crossing.

**REMEMBER: When using the bus, behave sensibly and safely for all parts of the journey.**

Any pupil that causes damage to buses, bus stops or shelters and/or does not meet the required standard of behaviour on the bus could:

- Have their pass withdrawn.
- Be banned from the bus.
- Be prosecuted by the police.
- Be required to pay for any damage they have caused.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Please see the information below on popular questions relating to school bus services in Wigan.

### ***Who co-ordinates and funds the school bus services?***

School bus services are co-ordinated by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). TfGM don't run any buses, but most of the services in this booklet are provided by funding from TfGM to bus operators to provide the services shown.

### ***How do you decide where to run the buses?***

Some schools provide information to TfGM to allow us to understand the areas where students live to determine where there is likely to be a demand for services, otherwise we will look at where students travelled in previous years. Buses are not cheap to run, so to ensure that we make the maximum use of the resources we have available, we will only provide buses where there are at least 25 students on a line of route. Where there are less than 25 students then the general service network can be used to get to/from school.

### ***There is no bus for my child to get to school. How are they going to get there?***

Many students across Greater Manchester use the general network of services to get to/from school, basic details of these are provided within the timetable pages and full timetables for these services can be found at [tfgm.com/public-transport/bus/](http://tfgm.com/public-transport/bus/).

### ***The route and timetable of my child's service has been changed from last year, why is this?***

As the numbers of students to schools from individual areas fluctuates, this means that routes may be revised to cater for these fluctuations. To ensure that there are enough students on the route to justify the service running, buses from areas may be combined to ensure that there are enough numbers of students for each bus to run.

### ***Will it change again?***

TfGM reviews the operation and use of services throughout the year and particularly during the autumn term to determine whether any changes are necessary. Mid-year changes predominantly take place at October half-term but can take place at any point in the year. It is possible that routes may change again next year if the number of students using services are low, suitable alternative services are in place or if there has been a significant change in the location of students attending school.

### ***My child is applying for a place not at our local school, there is a bus service there now, will it be there next year?***

Services are subject to change, and the provision of a service this year does not mean that the service will necessarily be provided next year. Before deciding to attend a non-local school, consider how your child would get to school if the school bus was no longer provided.

### ***My child's school bus now drops them off much earlier and picks them up later than now, why is this?***

To make maximum use of our buses, we look to use the buses to run more than one journey. This means that some students will be dropped off earlier in the morning, up to 30 minutes before the start of school, to allow the bus to run onto another school or will be picked up later in the afternoon, up to 20 minutes after the end of school, because the bus has run a journey preceding.

### ***We live local to our school - will my child be able to use the bus?***

Most of our school bus services are in place to carry students who live more than 2 miles from school. 2 miles has been used as this is the absolute minimum statutory distance before students may be eligible for free school travel. Whilst there may be a limited number of places available for students who live closer than 2 miles, local students are encouraged to walk to school. More information on walking to/from school can be found at [activetravel.tfgm.com/](http://activetravel.tfgm.com/).

### ***Why don't you just put another bus?***

TfGM's funding predominantly comes from a levy on the 10 districts of Greater Manchester and ultimately from the Council Tax. Like all Local Authorities we have a limited budget, and this means that we don't have the money to simply put on an extra bus. Where buses are not provided, the student numbers are low enough to be accommodated on the general service network.

### ***Will my child get a seat on the bus?***

Most buses provided allow for both seated and standing passengers, this means that some students may need to stand especially on more popular services for part or all of their journey to ensure that we can provide places to the maximum number of students possible.

### ***There was a bigger bus last year, why is it now smaller?***

We look to provide places for everyone in the most cost-effective manner, smaller buses cost less to run than larger buses, so we will try to provide buses which match the current demand for places. This may mean some double deck vehicles have been replaced by single deck vehicles with some students needing to stand for part or all of their journey.

### ***What happened to all the Yellow School Buses?***

Everything gets older - even our buses!! After many years serving the area, most of these buses have now been retired from service.

### ***My child has a large sports bag or instrument, do you provide luggage space?***

Unfortunately, the buses we use have very limited luggage space to ensure that we can carry the maximum number of students. If there is room on the bus then drivers may allow the carriage of a large item, but this cannot be at the expense of carrying another student and if your child's service is very popular then you will need to consider alternative methods.

### ***Are the buses provided only for school students?***

All school bus services operate as local bus services. This means that they are open for everyone to use. Most of the time services are not used by anyone other than students, but it is possible.

### ***Do I need a special pass to use the school buses?***

To travel for reduced fare on the bus, students must hold an iGo card and present this to the driver each time. More information on fares is shown below. The Yellow Bus Pass scheme will not be in operation in 2021/22.

If you've any other question not answered above, then please call our Traveline team on 0161 244 1000.